



House Select Committee on Homeland Security **Democrats**

JIM TURNER, Ranking Member

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Turner: More Staff Needed for Border Security and Growth

Congressman Jim Turner, Ranking Member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security took the first step toward increasing the number of border patrol and inspectors at ports of entry by requiring the Department of Homeland Security to determine how many front line officers it takes to secure porous U.S. borders and expedite commerce.

“Securing our borders while maintaining the flow of people and commerce is one of the central challenges of the Department of Homeland Security,” said Turner. **“First we must do the study to tell us what we truly need. Then we must give our border communities the staff they need to secure our borders and promote economic development.”**

Turner's amendment transfers \$450,000 from the Office of the Undersecretary of Management to Customs and Border Protection for an independent study to determine necessary levels at U.S. ports of entry and border patrol sectors.

“This study is the first step towards strengthening our border. Without it, we are simply pulling numbers from thin air,” said Turner. **“We also need to be prepared to dramatically increase staffing to avoid interruption of trade and commerce when the new US-VISIT border security program is implemented on our southern border.”**

The Turner Amendment accomplishes one of the goals identified by Democrats on the Homeland Security Committee in the report released on the anniversary of the Department of Homeland Security, *America at Risk: Closing the Security Gap*.

The Turner amendment is supported by numerous groups, including the National Border Patrol Council, the 18,000 inspectors who make up the National Immigration and Naturalization Service Council, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

“We must do all that we can in a time of war against al Qaeda to ensure our nation’s borders are as secure as they need to be. Understanding our frontline staffing needs is a much needed first step.”

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